



## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** Fall 2017

**To:** St. Jude the Apostle Parents

**From:** Michele Schulte, Principal

**Subject:** VIRTUS training & Fingerprinting information to Volunteer @ St. Jude's

---

Welcome to the St. Jude's community! We wanted to let you know about a few important things related to parent volunteer hours, particularly for Kindergarten and new parents. Many of your hours will most likely be spent on campus and in the classroom assisting with activities for your student and the school. This is a wonderful opportunity to not only witness your child and their educational, spiritual and social growth first hand but it gives you incredible visibility into the peers with whom your child attends school, the teachers and aides and the educational philosophy and culture of the school.

In order to participate as a parent volunteer in activities directly involving the students, however, you must be VIRTUS trained. Below we will explain exactly what that means.

### **First, what is VIRTUS?**

VIRTUS is an awareness program sponsored by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles which assists and facilitates the Church and the Diocesan schools in being a safe haven for children and preventing child sexual abuse through the specific program, Protecting God's Children.

### **The Protecting God's Children Program**

Most organizations that work with children have some sort of child safety program. Through the Protecting God's Children program, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles helps churches and religious organizations refine their roles as child-safe environments and empowers caring adults to protect children.

The Protecting God's Children program educates and trains adults (clergy, religious, teachers, staff, volunteers, and parents) about the dangers of abuse, the warning signs of abuse, the ways to prevent abuse, the methods of properly reporting suspicions of abuse, and responding to allegations of abuse.



The program is comprehensive and multi-dimensional—incorporating proven best practice standards for the prevention of child sexual abuse by clergy, staff, volunteers, and others who interact with children within the church or school environment. It is a three-hour live session which educates attendees in understanding the signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse, and five empowerment steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse.

### **How do I attend a training session?**

You can log on to the LA Archdiocese link below which takes you directly to the Protecting Children tab for information about fingerprinting locations and Virtus sessions. Available sessions may vary by parish. There is no cost to you for fingerprinting or attending a Virtus training session. Proof of VIRTUS training must be turned into the school office to be kept on file.

St. Jude's Church usually hosts a few sessions each fall for new parents and as needed which are provided by our Parish's Faith Formation staff.

<http://www.la-archdiocese.org/org/protecting/safeguard/Pages/education.aspx>

\*\*Please note: This training only needs to be attended one time, not every year. Think of it as a really good thing. It means that when you aren't in your child's classroom, anyone who is has been trained and educated in keeping your child and their peers safe.

We thank you for the gift of your time to volunteer for the students of St. Jude the Apostle School.

Please contact Mrs. Schulte @ (818)889-9483 or [mschulte@stjudeschool.org](mailto:mschulte@stjudeschool.org) for any questions.